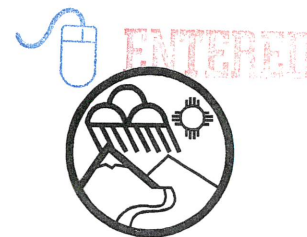




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RON CURRY
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DEPUTY SECRETARY

CERTIFIED MAIL - RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

August 27, 2004

R. Paul Detwiler, Acting Manager
Carlsbad Field Office
Department of Energy
P.O. Box 3090
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

Dr. Steven Warren, President
Washington TRU Solutions LLC
P.O. Box 2078
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-5608

**RE: NMED APPROVAL OF THE ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY - EAST/CENTRAL
CHARACTERIZATION PROJECT FINAL AUDIT REPORT, AUDIT A-04-03
WASTE ISOLATION PILOT PLANT
EPA I.D. NUMBER NM4890139088**

Dear Mr. Detwiler and Dr. Warren:

On January 13, 2004, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) received the initial Final Audit Report of the Argonne National Laboratory – East (ANL-E)/ Central Characterization Project (CCP) Audit Number A-04-03 (**Audit Report**) from the Department of Energy's Carlsbad Field Office (CBFO). CBFO and Washington TRU Solutions LLC (**the Permittees**) were required to submit this Audit Report under the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Hazardous Waste Facility Permit as specified in Permit Condition II.C.2.c. The intended scope of this annual recertification audit was to ensure the adequacy, implementation, and effectiveness of the ANL-E/CCP waste characterization processes for retrievably stored debris contact-handled waste and the assessment of characterization of solids sampling technique relative to the requirements of the WIPP Permit. The Audit Report consisted of the following items:

- A narrative report
- Completed copies of relevant Permit Attachment B6 checklists
- Final ANL-E/CCP standard operating procedures (hardcopy only)
- Corrective action report and items corrected during the audit

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- Objective evidence examined during the audit
 - General information
 - Solids and soils/gravel sampling
 - Acceptable knowledge
 - Headspace gas
 - Real time radiography
 - Visual examination

On July 8, 2004, NMED provided the Permittees with comments on the initial Audit Report, noting that it was incomplete due to the exclusion of certain elements that had originally been within the scope of the audit. On July 28, 2004, NMED received the Permittees' response to the comments in a transmittal dated July 23, 2004, which included a revised Final Audit Report, revised B6 Checklists, and additional operating procedures.

NMED concludes that the revised Audit Report demonstrates that ANL-E/CCP has adequately implemented the applicable characterization requirements of the WAP. Therefore, NMED approves the Permittees' Final Audit Report for ANL-E/CCP Audit A-04-03 recertification of retrievably stored debris contact handled waste and for characterization of solids sampling technique, and amends the approvals for Audit A-02-03 and Audit A-03-13 issued by NMED on May 8, 2003 and Audit A-03-26 issued by NMED on June 1, 2004 to include all waste forms evaluated by this joint recertification and evaluation of new characterization technique audit.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Steve Zappe at (505) 428-2517.

Sincerely,



James P. Bearzi
Chief
Hazardous Waste Bureau

JPB:soz

cc: Charles Lundstrom, NMED WWMD
Steve Zappe, NMED HWB
Tracy Hughes, NMED OGC
Gordon Appel, IL DNS
John Riekstins, IL EPA
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